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TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL – APRIL 6 , 1999

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At 9:24 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Tuesday, April 13, 1999, at 6:00 p.m. for a closed hearing on the appeal of John Brumbaugh of the Civil Service Commission decision sustaining his dismissal from the position of Police Officer in the Police Department, with the regular meeting commencing at 7:00 p.m.	

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***Adjourned in Memory of
Robert Shrauben***

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Sue Sweet
Recording Secretary

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City Council
April 6, 1999

April 6, 1999

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance City Council convened in a regular session at 5:31 p.m. on Tuesday, April 6, 1999, in the City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

Present: Councilmembers Cribbs, Horwich, Lee, Messerlian, O'Donnell, Walker and Mayor Hardison.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager Jackson, City Attorney Fellows, City Clerk Herbers, and other staff representatives.

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Agenda Item No. 20 was considered out of order at this time.

20. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 5:31 p.m., pursuant to Government Code Section Nos. 54956.9(a), 54956.9(b)(1), and 54956.8, the Council recessed into a closed session to discuss matters listed on the meeting agenda.

Councilman Messerlian left City Hall at 6:35 p.m.

At 7:03 p.m., the Council, absent Councilman Messerlian, reconvened in the library at North High School, and the meeting resumed in regular agenda order. No formal action was taken on any matter heard in closed session.

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2. FLAG SALUTE/ INVOCATION

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by North High School Army JROTC, Sergeant John Tucker commanding.

Reverend Barry Griffing, Jubilee Fellowship, gave the invocation for the meeting.

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Mayor Hardison asked that the meeting be adjourned in memory of Robert Shrauben, a former City of Torrance Street Department employee.

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3. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING/WAIVE FURTHER READING

MOTION: Councilman Lee moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Cribbs and, there being no objection, it was so ordered by Mayor Hardison (absent Councilman Messerlian).

MOTION: Councilman Lee moved that after the City Clerk has read aloud the number and title to any resolution or ordinance on the meeting agenda, the further reading thereof shall be waived, reserving and guaranteeing to each Councilmember the

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right to demand the reading of any such resolution or ordinance in regular order. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Cribbs and, there being no objection, it was so ordered by Mayor Hardison (absent Councilman Messerlian).

4. WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED ITEMS

City Manager announced that Redevelopment Agency Agenda Item No. 4a was deferred for one week.

5. COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Legislative Committee Meeting

Wednesday, April 7, 1999, 5:00 p.m.

Third Floor Assembly Room

Subject: Municipal Election 2000

Budget Workshops

Wednesday, May 26, 1999

Wednesday, June 2, 1999

Council Chambers, 5:30 p.m.

Councilman Walker announced that the Torrance Rose Float Committee will meet on April 14, 1999, at 5:30 p.m., to discuss the City's year 2000 Rose Float entry.

Councilman Lee announced that a meeting of the Armed Forces Day Committee will be scheduled in the near future.

Mayor Hardison announced the grand opening of the Teen Center on Saturday, April 10, 1999, with tours being given from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Mayor Hardison announced the availability of additional material for Item Nos. 7e and 13c (2).

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

7a. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MARCH 9, 1999

7b. POLICE VEHICULAR TRAINING

Recommendation

The Chief of Police recommends that City Council appropriate \$20,000 from the existing interest-bearing Asset Forfeiture account established in 1994 to fund the Police Department's Precision Intervention (P.I.T.) Technique Driving Program.

7c. D.A.R.E. DONATION

Recommendation

The Chief of Police recommends that City Council accept the donation of \$531.60 for the Police department's D.A.R.E. Program.

7d. CONTRACT RE CYCOM DATA SYSTEMS, INC.

Recommendation

The City Attorney and the Information Systems Director recommend that City Council approve the contract with Cycom Data Systems, Inc. in the amount of \$24,970 for the purchase and implementation of Y2K compliant prosecution software.

7e. EXTENSION OF DEL AMO BOULEVARD

Recommendation

The Engineering Director recommends that City Council:

- (1) Approve an agreement with Holmes & Narver to prepare a project study report for the extension of Del Amo Boulevard from Maple Avenue to Crenshaw Boulevard for an amount not to exceed \$65,050;
- (2) Authorize a 5% contingency for this agreement in the amount of \$3,250;
- (3) Appropriate \$68,300 from the Gas Tax Fund;
- (4) Authorize the Mayor to execute and the City Clerk to attest to this agreement on behalf of the City for the preparation of the Del Amo Boulevard extension project study report.

MOTION: Councilwoman O'Donnell moved for the approval of the Consent Calendar as written. The motion was seconded by Councilman Walker and passed by unanimous roll call vote, with Councilman Walker abstaining on Item 7a (absent Councilman Messerlian).

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

13a. COMMITTEE REPORT ON FY 1998-99 MID-YEAR BUDGET REVIEW

Recommendation

The Finance and Governmental Operations Committee recommends that City Council concur with the following recommendations;

- (1) Accept and file the period 7 (mid-year) budget report; and
- (2) Approve the program modifications for Cable Television Public Access Fund, Engineering Department personnel budget modification, Fire Department Communication Center, and position adjustments from the City's Classification Plan.

Assistant Finance Director Flewellyn presented the Committee's report (per written material of record). He explained that the City is now using accounting periods (4 weeks/13 periods) instead of the monthly system (4.3 weeks/12 periods) and that this report reflects the City's financial status as of the end of period 7. He advised that labor and material expenditures are on target and expected to be within the budget. He indicated that property tax revenues are projected to fall short of budget estimates by approximately \$850,000, noting that this shortfall would be partially offset by increases in other revenues and that the cause of the shortfall was being investigated. He advised that budget projections for utility users' tax revenues might have to be revised downward for the next fiscal year because of deregulation. He outlined the proposed program modifications for the Cable Television Public Access Fund, the Engineering Department,

the Fire Department, and the position adjustments resulting from the City's Classification Plan; and discussed additional information that will be included in future budget reports as requested by the Committee.

Mayor Hardison pointed out that many property owners are under the mistaken impression that all the property taxes they pay are returned to the City, and Mr. Flewellyn explained that the City receives approximately 12 cents on the dollar.

Referring to deregulation, Mayor Hardison asked if the City was looking into whether money could be saved by using a different source for electricity. Assistant City Manager Giordano advised that that possibility was being explored, but noted that the full benefit of deregulation will not be realized for another year and that the City already enjoys a very favorable rate on streetlights. With regard to residential users, Ms. Giordano stated that it will be two years before bonds are paid for and regulated companies have recovered stranded costs, and at that time individual homeowners will be able to take advantage of more competitive rates. Mayor Hardison suggested that a forum be held in the future to help educate residents about their options.

MOTION: Councilwoman Cribbs moved to concur with the Committee's recommendations. The motion was seconded by Councilman Lee and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Councilman Messerlian).

13b. ECONOMIC INVESTMENT FUND ASSISTANCE TO GEORGE P. JOHNSON COMPANY

Recommendation

The City Manager recommends that City Council authorize the Mayor to execute and the City Clerk to attest to an agreement with George P. Johnson Company for the utilization of \$30,000 in Economic Investment Fund (EIF) assistance to help offset costs associated with the construction of their new corporate headquarters located at 18500 Crenshaw Boulevard.

Assistant to the City Manager Sunshine, presented the staff report (per written material of record), explaining that the company will be building a 180,000 square-foot facility and the \$30,000 will be used to offset infrastructure costs associated with the construction of the facility. He noted that two other assistance packages had been completed but did not come before the Council because they did not reach the \$25,000 threshold.

MOTION: Councilman Lee moved to concur with the staff recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Walker and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Councilman Messerlian).

13c. SECOND 1999-2001 BUDGET WORKSHOP

Recommendation

The City Manager recommends that City Council open and conduct a budget workshop for the purpose of receiving public input related to the 1999-2001 City operating budget format.

City Manager Jackson advised that this workshop was part of an outreach effort to gain input from residents regarding the development of the 1999-2001 budget. He noted that a workshop had been conducted for City employees and that the details would be forthcoming in a separate report, and called attention to the draft of the Director's Messages included in the supplemental material.

With the aid of charts, Assistant Finance Director Flewellyn went over the history of Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) rates, detailed recent rate reductions, and explained that money was being reserved to mitigate the impact of future rate fluctuations. He outlined the ten-year projections for the General, Sanitation, Sewer, Airport, Transit, Water, Cultural Arts Center, and Parks and Recreation Funds; responded to questions from Councilmembers regarding those projections; and summarized areas of concern that need to be addressed in the upcoming budget.

City Manager Jackson emphasized that City employee retirement plans provide a fixed benefit and are not affected by changes in PERS rates, briefly outlined the retirement plans for safety and miscellaneous employees, and explained that the rate reductions were the result of strong investment earnings. He elaborated on budgetary concerns, including the lighting and landscaping district, short-term and long-term disability insurance, the Parks and Recreation Enterprise Fund, Worker's Compensation liability reserves, the Vehicle Replacement Fund, and on-going maintenance of capital projects. He discussed guidelines being used by staff to revise departmental budgets and noted that the Council had already approved additional funding for the 2000 Rose Float, and that requests had been received from the Chamber of Commerce regarding the Visitors Bureau and the South Bay Cities Council of Governments regarding permanent staffing.

Referring to a landscaping/improvement project underway at 190th Street and Inglewood Avenue, Councilman Lee requested that consideration be given to doing more of such projects, noting that they have been well received by the community.

Assistant City Manager Giordano provided an overview of the Strategic Plan adopted in February of 1996, including its goals and objectives and how they were developed; and reported on the progress of the three-year update of the plan which began in May 1998, detailing the results of statistical surveys, environmental scans, employee surveys, and focus groups conducted from October through December of 1998. City Manager Jackson noted that the full report on the update would be presented later in the month.

Mayor Hardison invited comments from the public.

Ms. Pat Holcombe, 3342 West 181st Street, asked if anything is being done to address the Y2K problem and if plans exist for a desalinization plant.

Mr. Jerry Jonas, 21405 Howard Avenue, asked about the City's action plan on the Los Angeles Airport expansion. Mayor Hardison advised that the matter would be on the April 27 Council meeting agenda and that action would be taken at that time.

Mr. Cliff Numark, 1424 Madrid Avenue, #3, questioned whether the impact of Internet retailing was accounted for in the ten-year projection of General Fund revenues.

Referring to a letter submitted for the record (unsigned), two members of the public expressed concerns about the lack of affordable housing in Torrance and suggested that people with disabilities, especially those with children, should be given priority.

Ms. Hope Witkowsky, 18827 Gerkin Avenue, called attention to the need for new landscaping at the corner for 190th Street and Hawthorne Boulevard; and noting that affordable transportation is a major issue for senior citizens, asked that consideration be given to providing additional funding for Dial-a-Lift and subsidized taxicab tickets.

Referring to Agenda Item 13b, Mr. Pat Brady, 3235 West 188th Street, asked about the nature of the business of the George P. Johnson Company.

Mr. Tim Cummings stated that the Torrance Firefighters Association strongly believes that an increase in the number of full-time communications operators is needed, noting that current staffing can no longer handle the volume of calls and firefighters are being used to supplement communications staff on a daily basis. He expressed his opinion that the part-time operators approved under Item 13a (Fire Department program modification) will not remedy the problem. Mayor Hardison stated that the issue needs to be explored in more detail, but that the program modification will at least provide some immediate assistance.

Ms. Margaret Deeds, 17039 Delia Avenue, requested a status report on the improvements scheduled for the Artesia Boulevard corridor.

Ms. Shirley Turner, 23216 Juniper Avenue, reading from a letter from the Friends of Madrona Marsh (of record), asked that funding be provided to complete the basic contouring of the marsh; that \$5,000 be allocated for regular yearly clean-up; that a senior and assistant groundskeeper be provided; that a rotary riding lawnmower be purchased; and that a truck with a lift be dedicated for full-time use at the marsh. She stated that the City's hiring of people to do classes at the marsh is not cost-effective and that the Friends have a long history of planning and putting on programs using volunteers. She noted that when the preserve was dedicated to the City in 1986 it was specified that money raised at the marsh must remain with the marsh.

Mr. Albert Ritz, 16602 Falda Avenue, requested that the storm drain in front of his house be repaired.

Ms. Kathryn Roberts, 17031 Spinning Avenue, a member of the Library Commission, called attention to improvements needed at the North Torrance Library.

Ms. Kathleen Benz, 18720 Felbar Avenue, stated that she had recently volunteered to assist at the Friends of Madrona Marsh annual canoeing event and was dismayed that the City collected all the registration fees. She commented that she believed the event should be a fundraiser for the FOMM. Mayor Hardison related her understanding that the money collected would be reserved for use at the marsh.

Mayor Hardison asked staff to address some of the issues that were brought up by the public.

City Manager Jackson explained that some of the improvements mentioned are Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), and not part of the regular budget. He noted that the CIP summary report for February and March 1999 was available at the meeting and contains detailed information about ongoing projects.

Assistant City Manager Giordano advised that City has done an extensive study of the Y2K problem and anticipates that they will be prepared. She noted that staff has begun to look outward to determine how to respond if something happens in the community and stated that a couple of practice drills will be conducted.

Assistant to the City Manager Sunshine indicated that plans are underway to construct a desalinization plant at the City yard, the second in the City; and explained that the George P. Johnson Company manufactures exhibits and displays for trade shows throughout the world. With regard to Internet retailing, he advised that at this point that issue is viewed as having a neutral impact on the budget because, while some sales tax revenue may be lost, the City benefits from Internet businesses operating within Torrance. He related his understanding that as Internet sales progress, the state and federal government will take action to ensure that tax revenue sources are not lost.

Parks and Recreation Director Barnett advised that he would get together with Streetscape personnel to address the landscaping problem at 190th Street and Hawthorne Boulevard, and would respond to Madrona Marsh related issues at a later date. Regarding senior citizen transportation, he advised that over 3,000 seniors have registered to receive senior taxicab ride tickets, and that 500 to 600 seniors regularly participate in the program. Mayor Hardison noted that the Dial-a-Lift program is restricted to people with physical handicaps. City Manager Jackson advised that bus routes are being refined which may result in improved accessibility for seniors. Transit Operations Manager Turner indicated that a new lower floor bus will soon be put into service that is more user friendly and easily accessible by wheelchairs.

Street Services Director Bell agreed to meet with Mr. Ritz regarding the storm drain in front of his property, and Engineering Director Burt offered to update Ms. Deeds on the Artesia Boulevard corridor.

City Librarian Buckley advised that branch facility needs will be an area of focus in the next few years.

Mayor Hardison thanked the public for coming out and sharing their concerns and invited them to self-address postcards available at the meeting to remind them of future budget workshops.

Councilman Messerlian returned to the Council meeting in the library at North High School at 8:39 p.m.

18. ADDENDUM MATTERS

None.

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The Council met as the Redevelopment Agency from 9:06 to 9:08 p.m.

19. ORAL COMMUNICATION

19a. City Manager Jackson thanked City staff and the Torrance Unified School District for all their efforts in planning and executing the Council meeting.

19b. City Clerk Herbers invited the public to view watercolors in the City Clerk's office by this month's Art on View artist, Dottie Brittnacher, previous recipient of Excellence in Arts Award.

19c. Councilwoman Cribbs thanked the public for coming to the meeting and thanked staff for their efforts.

19d. Councilman Horwich thanked the public and North High School and wished a speedy recovery to Tim Scully, Principal.

19e. Councilman Lee offered suggestions for future off-site meetings, as did Councilwoman O'Donnell.

19f. Councilman Messerlian noted concerns regarding Caltrans fence repairs on Pacific Coast Highway.

19g. Responding to Councilman Messerlian's inquiry, City Manager Jackson advised that the first phase of the new City of Torrance entry signs have been installed and that long-range plans call for landscaping around the signs.

19h. Councilwoman O'Donnell acknowledged the Eagle Scout Court of Honor held on March 13, 1999, honoring Torrance scouts Samuel Ahn, Weston Motoyasu, Ryan Murakami, Eric Takaki, Chad Tupaz, and Mark Weber.

19i. Councilwoman O'Donnell invited the public to attend the Torrance Symphony fundraiser at the Torrance Cultural Arts Center on April 10, 1999, featuring music of the '60s.

19j. Councilwoman O'Donnell distributed the Municipal Area Express (MAX) brochures describing routes and called attention to special offer. For further information on MAX call 1-800 266-6883.

19k. Responding to members of the public who had spoken earlier in the meeting regarding affordable housing, Mayor Hardison stated that Section 8 housing was a Federal program with certain guidelines and noted that staff would continue to dialogue with local organizations.

19l. Mayor Hardison extended thanks to staff, Cable TV, North High School, Arlene Barco, City Manager's staff, and to the Council for their efforts in bringing government to the people.

19m. Ms. Shirley Turner invited Council for a picnic lunch at Madrona Marsh and announced a Spring Science Camp.

20. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Considered earlier in the meeting (see page 1).

21. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:24 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Tuesday, April 13, 1999, at 6:00 p.m. to conduct a closed hearing on the appeal of John Brumbaugh of the Civil Service Commission decision sustaining his dismissal from the position of Police Officer in the Police Department, with the regular Council meeting commencing at 7:00 p.m.

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***Adjourned in Memory of
Robert Shrauben***

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